



MINUTES

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, February 21, 2024, 4:00 P.M.
Boardroom, Service and Resource Centre,
411 Dunsmuir Street, Nanaimo, BC

Members:

Councillor S. Armstrong, Chair
Councillor H. Eastmure
S. Brodie, At Large Member
K. Coulthard, At Large Member
D. Cowling, At Large Member
D. Herman, At Large Member
K. Lambert, At Large Member* (joined 4:19 p.m.)
C. Middleton, At Large Member
J. Millbank, At Large Member
R. Taylor, At Large Member

Absent:

J. Bowen, At Large Member

Staff:

R. Harding, General Manager, Community Services/Deputy CAO
B. Sims, General Manager, Engineering and Public Works
T. Doyle, Fire Chief
J. Elliot, Director, Public Works
S. Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services
J. Holm, Director, Planning and Development
D. LaBerge, Director, Public Safety
N. Sponaugle, Communications Advisor
A. Chanakos, Recording Secretary

1. CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER:

The Public Safety Committee Meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m.

* Denotes electronic meeting participation as authorized by "Council Procedure Bylaw 2018 No. 7272"

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA:

It was moved and seconded that the Agenda be adopted. The motion carried unanimously.

3. CHAIR'S REPORT:

a. Introductions of Committee Members (Round Table)

Introduced by Councillor Armstrong.

Mayor Krog welcomed the members to the Public Safety Committee (the Committee) and thanked them for volunteering their time and efforts to the community.

Committee members and Staff gave briefly introduced themselves and outlined what they hoped to accomplish with the committee.

4. PRESENTATIONS:

a. Committee Orientation/Meeting Procedures

Introduced by Sheila Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services.

- Reviewed the role of the Committee and the Committee Operating Guidelines
- Noted "Council Procedure Bylaw 2018 No. 7272" and its importance to the Committee
- Identified the key date calendar and reviewed the schedule for upcoming Public Safety Committee meetings

Kevin Lambert joined the meeting electronically at 4:19 p.m.

- Discussed meeting procedures including quorum, identifying topics for meetings, and delegations/presenters
- Reviewed Robert's Rules of Order
- Reviewed rules of decorum for members of the Committee
- Noted "Code of Conduct Bylaw 2022 No. 7348" and how it applies to the Committee
- Discussed how to determine conflicts of interest and when they would apply

5. REPORTS:

a. Terms of Reference

Richard Harding, General Manager, Community Services/Deputy CAO, reviewed the Terms of Reference for the Public Safety Committee and discussed the purpose of the Committee, the term Committee Members will serve and the various City departments involved within the Committee.

6. OTHER BUSINESS:

a. Future Meeting Items

Introduced by Dave LaBerge, Director, Public Safety.

- The first Public Safety Committee was created in 2012
- Reviewed the *Community Charter* and the authority the City has as a municipality
- The City has no authority over health, criminal law or controlled substances, which are the main concerns raised by citizens regarding public safety
- Bylaw Services focuses more on issues regarding life safety, rather than visual esthetics
- Reviewed strategic priorities from the past Public Safety Committee
- The Nanaimo Neighbourhood Network requested to attend future Public Safety Committee meetings as a regular presenter to check in with the committee and identify challenges they are dealing with
- Bylaw Services identified a number of commonly occurring issues including:
 - Vacant buildings/properties
 - Proximity of neighbourhoods to health and social services
 - Public infrastructure, including parkades, and concerns with people sheltering inside, human waste and damage to vehicles
 - Downtown streets and storefronts experiencing challenges with weapons, shopping carts, human waste and graffiti
- Staff are currently working on a bylaw to address concerns regarding safety in public facilities
- Homelessness affects all areas of the City, not just the downtown
- The Downtown Nanaimo Community Safety Action Plan (Safety Action Plan) was adopted by Council in April 2022, and is intended to improve safety and security in the downtown

- The City receives \$2.5 million in annual investments to help fund initiatives including Community Safety Officers, the Clean Team, Park Attendants and the Vandalism Relief Grant
- Staff will evaluate progress with the Safety Action Plan and see if there are any resourcing gaps to be filled
- Staff are developing a strategic framework to expand the Safety Action Plan to cover all areas of the City, and will report back to the Public Safety Committee for feedback

Councillor Armstrong facilitated a roundtable discussion to identify potential future agenda topics.

It was moved and seconded that the Public Safety Committee recommend that Council add the Nanaimo Neighbourhood Network as a standing presentation item on Public Safety Committee Agendas for up to ten minutes at each Public Safety Committee Meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

Committee discussion continued. Highlights included:

- Providing the report from the Nanaimo Area Public Safety Association titled “The Recent Evolution of the Overdose Crisis in Nanaimo and the Impacts of Street Disorder on Neighbourhoods” to the Corporate Officer for review and distribution to Committee Members
- Warming and cooling centres
- Generalized downtown disorder
- Preparing for the next heat dome and ensuring infrastructure is in place to protect vulnerable citizens
- Potential presentation regarding supportive housing and how surrounding neighbourhoods are affected
- Potential presentation from a School Liaison Officer to discuss issues kids are facing in school
- Inviting the Systems Planning Organization to discuss work being done around health and housing
- Gathering input from members of the vulnerable population to determine how the City can support their needs
- Potential presentation from Chief Doyle regarding fire safety
- Suggestion to replace School Zone signs in non-enforceable zones with School Area signs to alert drivers there is a school nearby
- Advocacy for restorative justice

7. QUESTION PERIOD:

The Committee received no questions from the public regarding agenda items.

8. ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved and seconded at 5:44 p.m. that the meeting adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.

CHAIR

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

CORPORATE OFFICER